

## CHARIVARIA.

Will the result of Old Age Pensions be the abolition of workhouses? asks a correspondent. We hope not. The country ought surely to maintain some sort of shelter for the head of the broken-down taxpayer.

Mr. WILL THORNE, M.P., complains that very few politicians are sincere. Mr. ASQUITH and Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE and Mr. BALFOUR and Mr. LONG, he declares, talk fiercely from the front benches, but dine or smoke together afterwards. So different from Mr. KEIR HARDIE and the KING!

Mr. PETE CURRAN, too, does not think much of the House of Commons. He has stated publicly that he is doubtful whether he has ever been in such bad company as that with which he has been compelled to associate in his experience as Member of Parliament. Evidently the proposal for the abolition of the Upper House does not go far enough.

The Government refuses to give power, in its Licensing Bill, to publicans to appeal to the Quarter Sessions against the extinction of their licences. The Quarter Sessions, it appears, have in the past shown some consideration for the trade, and what the Government really wants is No-Quarter Sessions.

Meanwhile the debate in the Commons anyhow served a purpose by drawing attention to the fact that the Government, in its determination to reduce the on-licences (to the great advantage of the off-licences) is willing, for its own purposes, that what is undoubtedly the grocer evil shall remain.

The statement that certain Nationalist Members are thinking of wearing the Irish kilt in Parliament has aroused some curiosity as to the nature of that garment. According to one alarmist rumour, it consists merely of a Celtic fringe.

The Westminster Gazette is changing hands—but, fortunately, not

thus: "What can they know of England who only London know!" And we in our turn are almost tempted to ask: "What can they know of TENNYSON who only KIPLING know!"

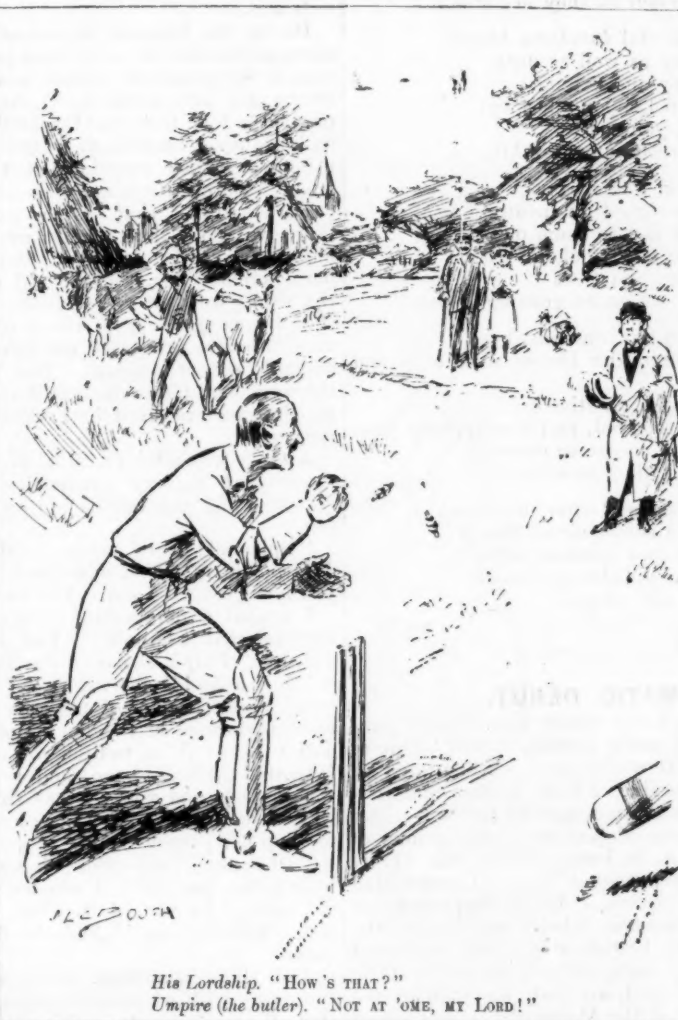
At a time when the hundreds of Archbishops and Bishops who came to London for the Pan-Anglican Congress are about to return home we would like to place it on record that their conduct while they have been with us has been exemplary, and that no single instance of crime of any sort, or even rowdiness, has been brought home to them.

The Queensland judge who held that oysters are wild beasts had evidently consulted the pages of his *Punch*, where, some years ago, it was recorded that an intending purchaser, who enquired whether the oysters he proposed to eat were fresh, was met with the satisfactory answer: "Fresh? Why one has just bitten a customer's lip."

One result of the Marathon Race, a stockbroking friend tells us, is a slight fall in Great Western Railway and London and South-Western Railway shares. Now that it has been shown that it is possible to get from Windsor to London in a comparatively short time on foot, it is thought that many business men who have to come to town each day will in future trot up, indulging in friendly races on the way.

From an advertisement in *The Daily Mail*:

"Americans always wear ready-made clothes and why not take a few wrinkles from them?" We are not at all sure that you can take the wrinkles from ready-made clothes.



His Lordship. "How's that?"  
Umpire (the butler). "Not at 'ome, my Lord!"

heads. Mr. SPENDER and Sir F. C. GOULD are to remain.

Admiral RODJESTVENSKY has met with a strange fate. The survivor of the horrors of the battle of Tsushima has perished at the hands of a newspaper correspondent.

Said *The Glasgow Daily Record* à propos of the poor attendance at the Olympic Games:—"We feel almost provoked to parody TENNYSON

## UNLIMITED LULU.

[With compliments to the Right Hon. LEWIS HARCOURT, First Commissioner of Works, to whose multifarious functions and versatile tact a contemporary has lately directed attention.]

You who, by right of office, fill the chair  
When Britain tenders public hospitality  
(In hope of feeding angels unaware)  
To foreigners from every known locality,  
And all the tongues of Babel  
Are urged to eat as much as they are able;  
In you how many graceful functions blend!  
It is your dearest joy as well as duty  
To elevate the Cockney and extend  
His latent interest in London's beauty;  
It is, in fact, your part  
To mould his taste for Monumental Art.  
To you alone the Royal Parks belong:  
If in those scenes designed for meditation  
The Suffragette would like to come out strong,  
It is to you that she must make oblation;  
The very grass and trees  
Must ask you, "May we go on growing, please?"  
It is beneath your mild but searching eye  
That char-maids purge the House with mop and  
besom;  
To you the Peers uplift a plaintive cry  
To have their pews repaired, and you appease 'em;  
Or, should you choose to doubt  
If they deserve it, then they go without.  
Some men rely on Grace and some on Works;  
You shine in both; a subtle air of fitness  
Under your nobly-groomed exterior lurks,  
And even Tories take delight to witness  
Your perfect self-control,  
Your limpid Lulucidity of soul.

O. S.

## MY DRAMATIC DÉBUT.

You may have seen a letter which was recently published by an important London journal, signed "One of the Great Unacted." It was mine. Unsuspected by the simple souls of Brickville, I have written and submitted to the so-called actor-managers of London, under whose senseless and emasculating sway the genius of our younger playwrights is being slowly but surely crushed out of existence, several plays of undoubted though unacknowledged merit. Inept adaptations of unpleasant Continental dramas, wholly unsuited to the purer atmosphere of the British stage, and mutilated and bowdlerised till they have entirely lost what little original virtue they possessed, are daily accepted by the so-called actor-managers of the Metropolis, under whose senseless and emasculating sway— But I perceive that I am repeating myself and my letter. As you have doubtless read it, this is an unnecessary waste of time. I turn from the general to the particular.

One of these rejected addresses was couched in the form of a duologue, at once wise and witty and tender and true. For five years and four months it had gone the round of the principal managers in London, only to return to me, time after time, like the dove to the ark, its delicate plumage soiled and disfigured by thumb-marks, which, had they had their deserts, would long ago have been registered at Scotland Yard. Little did I think when it was refused for the sixth time that Mrs.

MASTERMAN, our Rector's wife at Brickville, would be the humble and unconscious means of its seeing the glare of the footlights. Little did I think— But that belongs to a later part of the story. For the present, I need only say that, when I yielded to Mrs. M.'s demand for my assistance in raising funds for a new churchyard, I concealed the fact that the play which I promised to produce, with the assistance of GLADYS, was my own. I was resolved that it should be judged solely on its own merits.

It was.

During the frequent arm-chair rehearsals which were necessary before we were word-perfect (the mere acting was a comparatively simple matter, as, like all good drama, my play acted itself), GLADYS once or twice expressed a fear that the Brickvillians might not see its real beauty. Hadn't we better, she asked, do something which their unsophisticated minds would be able to grasp? Surely there must be some play—

I assured her that, as far as my experience went, there was none, and that it would be all right on the night, she would see. And, though privately I shared her apprehensions, they proved to be quite unfounded. Six times we were called before the curtain, and only the obvious jealousy of the stage-manager—the Brickville butcher—prevented me from responding to an undeniable seventh appeal. But I found consolation in the somewhat bitter thought that, for each of the rebuffs which I had received in London, Brickville had given me a call.

After it was all over, Mrs. M. came up to me in her flamboyant manner (inclined, as I often think, to *embonpoint*), and tapped me on the shoulder with her fan.

"Splendid!" she cried. "Magnificent! How ever did you do it? You were both first-rate. I can't tell you how grateful I am. You must always act for me."

I smiled a deprecating smile, secretly enjoying my long-deferred triumph. "Did you really like it?" I asked. "Didn't strike you as being amateurish?"

"Not a bit!" she said. "I was just going to tell you. Some friends of mine in the audience saw the piece performed in London by professionals. And they didn't do it half so well as you and Miss GLADYS!"

GLADYS looked at me, and I looked at GLADYS, and we grinned, and while I was thinking of a really neat way of scoring off Mrs. M. without being too severe she took up her parable again.

"Of course," she said, "it was all the acting. Silly little piece, isn't it? I wonder who it's by. But you got such a lot out of it. You really must go on the stage, both of you." And she fluttered off to her next victim.

And then, somehow, such is the divine power of sympathy with which some women are blessed, I found that all unconsciously, seeking only to heal my wounded self-esteem, GLADYS had slipped her little hand into mine. Mrs. MASTERMAN's failure to appreciate the fine and subtle qualities of my play had brought about the complete understanding with GLADYS which I had long sought in vain to compass by more direct methods. And so, though, like all true artists, I abhor the banal convention of a happy ending, my own story is brought to a close to the sound of wedding bells.

There is only one subject on which GLADYS and I are not agreed. She persists in thinking, as I confess I did myself at first, that Mrs. M. lied about her friends in the audience. But I am not so certain. After all, I seldom visit a London theatre. It seems to me more



### THE OPEN-MINDED SENTRY.

LORD ROSERERY. "PASS, FRIEND. ALL'S FAR FROM WELL!"

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO







Miss Gushington. "DOESN'T HE PLAY DIVINELY?"

Colonel Fitz-Foozle (suddenly waking up). "ER—WHAT'S HIS HANDICAP?"

than likely that one of the managers who read my duologue, suddenly realising that he was incapable of "visualising" my play in manuscript, produced it experimentally, without saying anything about it. Then, when it fell flat, as of course it was bound to do considering the incompetence of the young and untried actors to whom it was no doubt entrusted, he returned it to me with the usual polite but lying formula. Now if I were one of the so-called managers under whose senseless— [Thanks! Ring off, please.—Ed.]

#### THE PHEIDIPPIDES LEGEND.

"MARATHON SCHOLAR."—Many thanks for your offer to correct *Mr. Punch* in the matter of PHEIDIPPIDES. If you will kindly forward a quotation from any reputable historian of the time proving that PHEIDIPPIDES did not run from Marathon to Athens with news of the victory—whether any one else did or not—he (*Mr. Punch*) will be happy to inspect the passage. Meanwhile, the PHEIDIPPIDES legend, as immortalised by ROBERT BROWNING (you have heard of ROBERT BROWNING?), will serve as well as most other legends dating from that period.

"The Navy cannot be further weakened by these terrible exhibitions of personalities. Far better that there should be a clean sweep, involving the disappearance from the scene of all those involved, guilty as well as innocent."—*Daily Express*.

Getting rid of the guilty as well is quite an idea.

"The public meeting held in the Town Hall last night cannot but be regarded as otherwise than disappointing."—*Natal Mercury*.

The editor appears to us to be hedging.

#### LINES TO THE LAST STRAWBERRY:

SURVIVOR of the season's crimson rout,  
Whose comrades have incarnadined my platter,  
Late laggard of July, and just about  
To pass away into a pinkish batter,

I pause to dash  
The tear-drop from my eye, before I mash!

I shall not feel, I think, such fond regret  
When dying roses make the lawn look squalid,  
Nor when, too soon, across the slackened net  
The last white orb of summer has been volleyed,  
As now I do  
Soft spheroid, in eviscerating you.

What garden was it, languorous with scent,  
Where first the morning sun began to mottle  
Your homely features in the heart of Kent?  
And ere they packed you in the leaf-lined pottle  
On what low bed  
Of patent compost did you hide your head?

I cannot say. But, anyhow, the stream,  
The still, white stream of Lethe laps you closely;  
The sifted sweetness mingles with the cream;  
You perish, but you shall not perish grossly;  
A form so fat  
Deserves some pomp—Great Heavens, what was that?

Vile ingrate! Scarlet hypocrite! Is this  
The way you treat the fervour of a poet?  
What madness of the gods, what Nemesis  
(You looked the nicest of the lot, you know it)  
Has made me sing  
The mausoleum of a Creeping Thing?

### SALAMIS SIDE-LIGHTS.

[Contributed by our Extremely Sporting Correspondent, Author of "Marathon Memorabilia," "Marathonia," "Mince-meat from Marathon," etc., etc.]

THE Salamis Race, which is due to take place on Friday at Henley, will bring to a fitting conclusion the series of International aquatic contests upon which the eyes of the sporting world have been fixed for the past few days.

#### The Origin of the Race.

As all my readers know by this time, this race is called the Salamis Race because it commemorates the famous eight-oared crew, stroked by one PHEIDIPPIDES, which rowed from Salamis to Athens to announce the news of the great Greek victory over the Persian fleet, the distance between the two places being approximately the same (if we allow for the difference in the Greek calendar) as that which will be negotiated upon the Henley course on Friday.

The world's best crews are competing, they are in splendid condition, and international rivalry is acute. Though it is too early yet to venture to name the winner, I may safely predict that the winning crew, whichever it may be, will take a lot of beating.

#### The Course.

But, first, a few words as to the course. Below will be found a map of the Salamis Route.

[We much regret to say that our Extremely Sporting Correspondent has (by some error) sent us, instead of a plan of the Salamis Route, what appears to be a chart of the District Railway between St. James' Park and Hammersmith. As this can be seen at any Underground station, we forbear to reproduce it.—EDITOR.]

The course is in excellent condition, the surface being delightfully smooth; all the competing crews are enthusiastic about it, and are loud in their praises of the trouble the A.R.A. have taken to prepare it. On the whole, a wonderfully level route has been chosen, hills of any steepness having been carefully avoided.

#### Where to See the Race.

That the whole course will be lined with spectators goes without saying. I have, with some difficulty, prepared a list of trains and trams to the different points on the route, and—

[Our Correspondent has been too conscientious. The simplest way is to drive or train to Henley, walking

or rowing from there to the desired position.—EDITOR.]

#### Time Table of Race.

The times at which the leading crew may be expected at the different points named—

[Seeing that, if the Daylight Saving Bill should pass before the Salamis Race is rowed, all these times would become extremely misleading, we have decided to hold them over.—EDITOR.]

#### "Who's Who" of Crews.

Long Boat and Pony: Sensational Story.

CANADA.—The Canadian long boat (or, as we should say, "light ship"), is much fancied to win the race. The crew of the "long boat" have not been training with the Canadian runners at the Stadium, but have been rowing at Henley, where they have accomplished some sensational times, on several occasions arriving at the winning-post before their coach, who was upon a pony.

CAMBRIDGE.—The oldest of the competitors. Slightly on the wrong side of six hundred and seventy. Best suited by firm going and dry surface. Much fancied to win.

LEANDER.—The only Greek entry which has any chance of success. Its victory would be extremely popular at Athens. Much fancied to win.

BELGIUM.—With a high-springing action, this country, upon which the Belgians pin their faith, should be well up in the front. Much fancied to win.

#### Salamis Smatterings.

A herring won the last Salamis Race.

There is great diversity of opinion as to what is the best nourishment to take during the race. All agree upon the value of a wet sponge passed over the head and neck at intervals during the contest. Luckily, there is plenty of water obtainable for this purpose.

The original Salamis course was over salt water. At Henley the water is fresh. To avoid any suspicion of unfairness the Committee has explained the nature of the difference to the foreign competitors.

Curiously enough, the last Salamis Race was won by a herring. This is the first recorded instance of such a thing happening.

It is considered unlikely that any of the competitors will mistake the route.

A. A. M.

### THE BATTLE OF AVOIRDUPOIS.

[In the final of the Olympic Tug-of-War the City Police pulled over the Liverpool Police. The light-weight of the former team is stated to have scaled 14 stone.]

WHEN the foaming sea-god thunders  
On the mute marine parade;  
When the home-bound Vanguard  
blunders  
And the kerb is badly frayed;  
When the bull-whale seeks revenge in  
Battle for his consort slain;  
When one sees a donkey engine  
Drive a crane—

Things like these convey a notion  
To the human weakling's mind  
Of colossal power in motion,  
Bulk and majesty combined:  
Pulses in the heart are shaken  
By those mammoth powers at play.  
Much as by a tonic taken  
Thrice a day.

But of all titanic tussles  
That can sound the soul's abyss,  
Was there ever match of muscles  
Worthy to be ranked with this?  
What were all the Hellene's hobbies,  
What the pagan wrestler's scope,  
When compared with Briton's  
bobbies

On a rope?

Milo with his beefy dinners,  
Zeus-engendered Heracles,  
All the roll of classic winners  
Would not take the boots of these;  
Evermore in moments idle  
I shall muse upon the scenes  
Where they stamped their fratricidal  
Small eighteens.

And at eve, when ROBERT drowzes  
Softly at his usual post,  
While the careless world carouses,  
I shall drain a silent toast  
To that deathless tourney proper,  
Where, before a gaping throng,  
Copper made immortal copper  
"Pass along."

#### LITERARY GOSSIP.

[A New York publisher has lately been sending round the American Press a brief biographical notice of Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD, in which it is mentioned, among other things, that she is a granddaughter of 'the famous Dr. ARNOLD, who wrote the Tom Brown stories.'—Westminster Gazette, July 20.]

THE announcement that a new novel is shortly to be expected from the pen of Miss MARIE CORELLI may serve as an excuse for reminding our readers that it was her gifted ancestor, ARCANGELO CORELLI, the famous musician, who composed the well-known opera entitled *Mefistofele*; or, *The Sorrows of Satan*.

Mr. FRANK T. BULLEN, whose novels and stories dealing with sea

life have achieved so wide a popularity of recent years, is, we understand, a collateral descendant of the illustrious Miss ANNE BULLEN, whose remarkable romance *The Cruise of the Cachalot*, first brought her to the notice of KING HENRY VIII.

The late R. L. STEVENSON, though he spelt his name differently, was, we are assured on the best American authority, a grandson of the famous engineer, ROBERT STEPHENSON, to whom Mr. RUDYARD KIPLING dedicated his volume *Menai Inventions*.

Although it has been positively stated in some of the best American papers that Sir WILLIAM S. GILBERT is distantly connected with GILBERT WHITE of Selborne, we have good authority for asserting that this interesting allegation is unfounded. On the other hand, Mr. PERCY WHITE, the first large edition of whose new novel has been entirely exhausted, undoubtedly bears the surname of the gifted naturalist as well as that of BLANCO WHITE the eminent poet, a fact which is in itself strong presumptive evidence of hereditary genius.

An extraordinarily interesting discovery has just been made by Mr. VOLNEY P. SLOCUM, the literary paragraphist of *The Pittsburg Clarion*. It is to the effect that *East Lynne* and many other novels were written by Mrs. HENRY WOOD, the gifted vocalist and wife of the renowned conductor who presides over the Queen's Hall orchestra with such magisterial prestidigitation. The same writer has also placed it beyond a doubt that Mr. FRANK R. BENSON, the illustrious tragedian, is the author of *Through a College Window*, *The Upton Letters*, and the "Dodo" books.

Mr. W. H. HUDSON, the famous naturalist and author of *The Purple Land*, has written to the *Athenæum* to contradict the statement of the *New York Bookie* that at an earlier stage of his career he was known as Hudson the Railway King.

#### WOLFFE'S CHANNEL

SWIM COMMENCED.

"*Westminster Gazette*" poster.

Our geography is rusty, and we do not clearly remember where this channel is. But we are not surprised that the swimmers are beginning to try other channels for their energies, having been so frequently beaten by the English Channel.



New Owner (who has just bought schooner-yacht). "LOOK 'ERE, MCPHERSON, YOU'LL 'AVE TO 'AVE THAT PILLAR REMOVED BEFORE MY WIFE COMES DOWN. SHE'LL WANT TO SIT AT THE HEAD OF THE TABLE."

McP. "WEE, YE'LL HAE TO MAK A STEAMER O' HER, FOR THAT'S ANE O' THE MASTS!"

#### THE POSTMAN.

HAD it been an ordinary letter, the fellow would have just slipped it inside the letter-box and said nothing about it. But, you see, it was not an ordinary letter. People who write ordinary letters do not write them to me, either because they think that I am too æsthetic to tolerate the colour of a penny stamp, or because they cannot bring themselves to make the necessary outlay, or because they do not know my address. I rarely, if ever, receive letters from people outside the Services; in fact I may say that my only regular correspondent is the Army and Navy, whom I met over a deal in socks. One is perhaps a small number for a complete circle of friends, but I venture to think that there is more in my one friend than in twenty of your everyday acquaintances. My friend is the sort of creature who knows a bit about everything; and a friend who can and does tell you all about the

quality and price of all known things and draw pictures of most of them is a friend whose correspondence is worth having, even though he is only a Stores.

Now, my letter-box is built especially to fit my correspondence. It will only admit the ordinary-sized letter, and the people who write the ordinary-sized letter do not write it (as I have said) to me. Therefore the Postman cannot put my letter into the box, but must give it to me personally. That he cannot do if I am not here; so that, when I am away, my friend cannot write to me, a fact which saves him trouble and me disappointment. Hence the four knocks on the door and the Postman waiting without.

"Come inside, won't you?" I said to him.

"Now that is really nice of you," said the dear old fellow (as I thought him then) with tears in his eyes. "I have called on 487 others this evening and not one of them has even answered the door."



"The door should not ask questions," I said in my jocular way, as I led him through into the sitting-room. Once ensconced in our chairs before the fire where the July log was blazing, "How do you like being a Postman?" I asked him, more to start the conversation than with a view of eliciting scandalous chit-chat.

"Oh, so-so," he answered. "How do you like not being a Postman?" and from that we passed on to such other topics as a Postman and a non-Postman would naturally discuss together. "If you were to guess," he said, "how many letters were delivered in a year. . . ."

"I should," I interrupted, "guess wrong."

"But delivering a letter," he continued, "is not the simple job you suppose it to be. Ours is a difficult and responsible position, which requires a great deal of tactful discretion. Take this block of flats, for instance. The minute my rat-tat. . . ."

"I beg your pardon."

"I beg yours," he said.

"Let each keep his own," I suggested, "and consider the mutual transaction as complete."

"The minute," he pursued, "there is heard the double knock, which no other than a Postman can give and than which a Postman can give no other, everyone in the building expects a letter. 'There's BANKS,' you say to yourself; 'he's a decent sort of fellow, let's give him one. Then there's CLEAVER—he's got as much as is good for him already; and I gave Miss SAUNDERS one yesterday. FRASER means well; give him a post-card. HEBBLETHWAITE doesn't; give him a bill.' And so on."

"Why, then," I said a little crossly perhaps, "do you nearly always leave me out?"

"Well, you see, old man," he said apologetically, "if I give you a letter in the morning, you go back to bed and stay there reading it when you ought to be getting up, and, if I give you one in the evening, you stay up reading it when you ought to be going to bed. As you are always out for the afternoon delivery, what is a man to do?"

"Have a cigarette," I said, "and take it that you are forgiven."

"Thanks," he answered, putting his hand in his bag; "have a letter."

I blessed him for the kindly thought and gazed casually at the half-penny stamp. "Ah," I said, "from the Army. Do you know him?"

"Army?" he said. "Let me see. Doesn't he live with the Navy down Victoria way? Oh, yes, I know him fairly well; I call on him about five times a day."

"Excuse me opening it?" I asked in my best manner.

"I would excuse you willingly," he replied, "did the letter not happen to be open already."

"For once, old Thing," I laughed, "you are wrong. For this time only by some curious chance they have licked the flap."

"Indeed?" he said curtly, examining the envelope, which was obviously closed. "Then you owe me a penny."

I was too much hurt to argue with him, so paid him the penny with frigid politeness, telling him at the same time what I thought of this petty extortion. He saw I was upset and tried to pass the whole thing off as a joke, but it became plain that it was no joke when he refused to give me my penny back. There were words, and the upshot of it all was that I told him that I should not in future be at home when he knocked. He answered with passion that he should never knock again if he could possibly avoid doing so, and gave me back (as became a gentleman and a Postman) as much of my cigarette as he had not smoked.

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Since that eventful evening he has always brought old Stores' letters when I have been out and has forced them under the door. I hate to think what would happen if someone were to address to me a good-sized parcel.

### AMUSEMENT.

For the tenth time I laid aside the volume by Mrs. HENRY WOOD. Under other conditions I might have managed it; but this afternoon it was impossible. The rain grew worse as the glass rose higher. For the tenth time I endeavoured to find something new in *The Daily Telegraph*: I even read the advertisements. I walked round the pictures again, and again read the funeral card that was stuck in the mirror: SARAH ANN THURSBY, aged 59. A very easy age at which to die, I thought it. It was a wonder that she had lived so long. Her end was peace, anyway.

The rain was worse than ever, and the glass higher than ever. An old man was crossing the road under an umbrella, which so dripped that he was wetter in one part of his back than he would have been all over had

he carried a walking-stick. What was I to do? The train did not go for two hours yet; and a time comes when old *Tattlers* and old *Sketches*, celebrating plays long since dead, are less entertaining than nothing. Why had I not Mr. GLADSTONE's gift of going to sleep at any moment? One should cultivate it.

I wondered if HAYES had insured himself against this weather, and, if not, how he was taking his luck. I opened a cupboard in the hope of finding another book, but it contained only a pack of cards and some bagatelle balls. I looked out of the window again. The sky grew lighter with that lightness which, while on some days it means a clearing up, on days like this means worse rain. The gramophone in the bar began to sing. I turned again to Mrs. HENRY WOOD.

At this moment the door was knocked and the servant-girl came in carrying a book. "Please, sir," she said, "Mrs. WINTER sends you the Visitors' Book with her compliments, and hopes you may be amused by it."

Amused! Delightful word. I had thought never to be amused again. I took the book.

Have you ever examined the Visitors' Book of a country inn, either for amusement or with the cold eye of criticism? It is appalling. That is the only word I can think of, and I use it deliberately. Appalling. The beasts of the field become intellectual beside the facetious commentators and even serious commentators of these volumes, which, it must be remembered, exist in their thousands in this country alone.

"Dr. and Mrs. SILVESTER much enjoyed their stay at the White Hart, which they prolonged by two days owing to the beautiful weather."

"Lord DORRING and the Earl of PECKHAM can speak to the freshness of the White Hart eggs. No election brand here. Now we shan't be long."

"Mr. LIPSCOMBE and the members of the Roydale Botanical Society made a Hart-y meal."

"The Roydale Botanical Society understand chestnuts anyway!"

E. THOMAS.

"The Ten Boozers" arrived from Pulverhampton in time for lunch, and very soon made the joint look silly, especially His Nibs."

"Mr. and Mrs. BLAND have just concluded their fifth annual visit. Everything perfect as usual."



"ALLY SLOPER, BILL BAILEY, and WEE MACGREGOR wish long life and happiness to Host WINTER and Mrs. WINTER."

"Mrs. and Miss VAUGHAN, of The Cedars, Balham, have much enjoyed their stay. Everything at the White Hart is a treat."

"Everything is A 1 at the White Hart. Ask Emmie and Vi if they like raspberry jam. Not much, I don't fink."

#### THE SOFTEST OF THE FAMILY."

"It is a great pity that people use this book for the purpose of airing their would-be wit. The practice is in danger of causing others to think too lightly of Mrs. WINTER's excellent fare and unremitting kindness. H. ANSTRUTHER-STAPLES."

"'Arf time, cockey! B. MARJORIBANKS-CHOLMONDELEY."

"Mrs. WINTER served us a first-class tea at very reasonable cost at very short notice. In fact, I might say it was summarily served. We mean to come again."

DAVID JOHNSON."

And so on, for hundreds of pages. I read and read, and it got wetter and wetter as the glass rose. Was I amused? I don't know. But the time went, and at least I was not edified. But what a world!

#### A GUILBERTIAN SITUATION.

[Madame YVETTE GUILBERT, writing in the *Westminster Gazette* of July 21, strongly advocates the divided skirt, and concludes: "From the day on which women will become capable of using their feet and their fists, equality will be gained. . . . Ladies, cultivate muscle, for by muscle only will you conquer."]

"LADIES who, athirst for progress, Strive your fellow slaves to free, Let the Amazonian ogress Ever your exemplar be.

Futile is the fret and bustle  
Of the valiant Suffragette  
Unaccompanied by muscle,"  
Cries the prophetess YVETTE.

Followers of PETER KEARY,  
That portentous publicist,  
On the need of being cheery  
Must ferociously insist.

But the cult of mental hustle  
For the Feminist is vain;  
She must cultivate her muscle  
More severely than her brain.

Man at present is the stronger,  
But his reign cannot endure.  
Woman, trained a little longer,  
Will the upper hand secure.

And in many a hard-fought tussle,  
Constables, though stout and tall,



Officer (to new recruit doing "sentry go" for the first time). "NOW MIND YOU LET NO ONE GO BY WITHOUT CHALLENGING THEM."

Recruit. "THAT'S ALL RIGHT, GUV'NOR. DON'T YOU WORRY. THE SLIGHTEST NOISE WAKES ME UP!"

Must, against superior muscle,  
Like so many ninepins fall.

In the past her mode of dressing  
Made her sickly, weak and pale,  
Though it may have proved caressing  
To the senses of the male.

Now, abjuring frocks that rustle  
With a feminine frou-frou,  
She must concentrate on muscle  
And divide her skirts in two.

"Can anyone suggest a good opening for a small boarding house near London?"

The Queen.

Why not try a door? Much better than any of these fancy coal-shoots.

#### What Dog Collars are for.

"Mr. Pearce (the Clerk): How old is the dog?—Constable: About four months. He had teeth?—Oh, yes. And he could bite?—Yes. Well, that is the object of having a collar with the name and address on it."—*Daily Telegraph*. Dog-fanciers whose puppies are backward in their teething should make a note of this.

A SIGNBOARD at the Franco-British Exhibition directs visitors to "The French and British Sections of Food and Drink."

Section of Drink (British).—A split.

Section of Drink (French).—*Vin coupé*.



Belated Reveller (after feeling his way many times round). "LOCKED IN! LOCKED IN!"

### THIS CONCERNS YOU!

(In the manner of the *New Journalism*.)

ARE you reading "The Cow with the Crumpled Horn?" An odd title—some might call it a catch-half-penny title—but it is the name of the most remarkable romance that has been given to the readers of any journal during the past week; a romance, and yet not so much a romance as a story of real, live, struggling, palpitating people—people you know, people you meet every day of your life, people you can't avoid meeting. There is, for example, *Bingley Baines*, the great financier, who controls the money markets of the world, and who is about to

#### Engineer a War

between San Marino and Sweden in order to raise Spitzbergen railway stock half a point. There is *Cedric Poopington*, the young and ardent philanthropist and reformer, who leads the middle-class millions of London in their wild rush into Essex to annex small holdings—one of the most soul-stirring, gasp-compelling,

and yet wholly lifelike episodes in modern fiction. Then there is that beautiful enigma, the *Countess of Carpentaria*, the

#### Richest, Merriest Widow

in Europe, a puritan, with the wiles of a *MESSALINA*, half saint, half siren, wholly woman. Best of all, perhaps, you will like to meet *Perdita Popkins*, the penniless governess, whose beauty becomes the object of a cult in Paris, Vienna, Petersburg, and Penge, and whose motto is yet "All for love, and a little bit for myself." Just ordinary, actual people—weak, well-meaning, aspiring, sinning, palpitating people, who lunch at the Carlritz and wear diamond tiaras like ourselves.

#### "A Palp in every Far"

is the verdict of a bishop who was privileged to peruse the proof sheets. Begin it to-day; you won't be able to finish it for months and months.

#### Expert Advice.

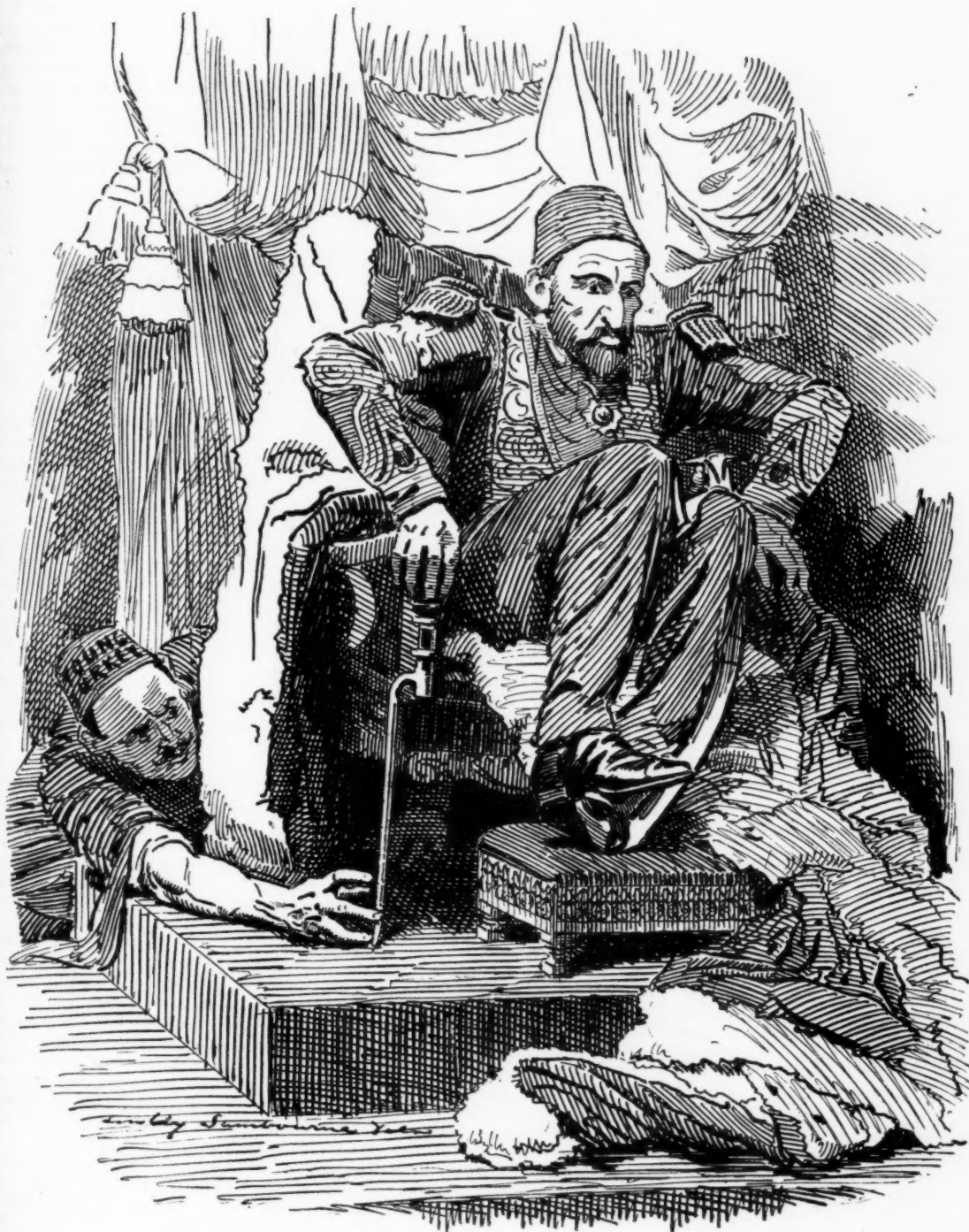
"White was the next to leave, Crawford bowling him with a ball that he had much better have left alone."—*Evening News*.

### A GOODWOOD MEETING.

Do you forget that Goodwood Day  
And all the vows we vowed,  
As we together strolled away  
Far from the madding crowd?  
How wistfully you shook your head  
As, when our fingers met  
In one last lingering clasp, I said,  
"Will you forget?"

Do you forget the dream you had  
About a number up,  
That haunted you, and made you mad  
To plunge upon the Cup?  
And though I swore dreams always  
Lied,  
And warned you not to bet,  
"A pony on for me," you cried,  
"And don't forget!"

I put that pony on for you,  
Though much against my will;  
The dream, of course, did not come true,  
And I am wondering still  
If you regard the vows you made  
As lightly as your debt;  
For I begin to be afraid  
You do forget.



THE THRONE PERILOUS.





## ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

*House of Lords, Monday, July 20th.*—One of the nights when the shabbiness of red leather benches lamented by Viscount RIDLEY is hidden by crowded assemblage. At last the frozen-out gardeners of the legislative field, the coroneted unemployed, have work to do. Old Age Pensions Bill, read a first time the other day in presence, and with consent of, five Peers, comes up for second reading. WOLVERHAMPTON, youngest of Viscounts, making maiden speech in moving the stage, dexterously dragged in a tribute to Don José, "the Onlie Begetter" of the scheme.

This meant to be awkward for noble lords opposite who denounce measure as iniquitous in conception, ruinous to prosperity of the country, dangerous to existence of Empire, inasmuch as its drain upon public purse will necessitate reduction of amount appropriated to Imperial Defence. Fundamental principle of politics that circumstances alter cases. What's one man's nourishing meat at a certain epoch is deadly poison at another. Thus in another place, in debate on application of guillotine rules to Licensing Bill, we had PRINCE ARTHUR crushing PREMIER with quotation of uncompromising denunciation of the practice, delivered by him on former occasion;

ASQUITH retorting by reading from same record passage in which PRINCE ARTHUR extolled the guillotine as a beneficial, indispensable factor in legislation.

A pretty comedy, amusing at first, apt to pall by reason of constant repetition through revolving years. By-and-by, characters exchanged, we shall have Prime Minister PRINCE ARTHUR having rigged up the guillotine, reading extracts from ASQUITH's speech of last Friday in support of his case; Leader of the Opposition H. H. ASQUITH responding with quotation of PRINCE ARTHUR's withering denunciation of the practice. If plot and play a little stale, the grave air of conviction on part of principal performers never varies.

Whilst noble lords, excelling each other in denunciation of Old Age Pensions Bill, redressed the balance

by voting for the second reading, HAROLD COX in the Commons poses Government with awkward question. Cites case of Mr. JAMES WALKER, age fifty-five, recently charged with bigamy at Huddersfield Police Court, it being alleged that he had gone through form of marriage with eleven women.

"Will he," queried Cox (on behalf of his hon. friend Box, temporarily absent), "be entitled, on attaining the age of seventy, to an Old Age Pension? If not, under what provision of the Bill will he be excluded from the reward intended for veterans of industry?"

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, discreetly taking refuge behind fact that the case is *sub judice*, declined to discuss it, nevertheless, there it

Gratitude has no place in politics. Otherwise he would have halted on his way out to shake PRINCE ARTHUR warmly by the hand. It was he, whilst Leader of the House, who introduced this thrice-blessed machinery, failing which all legislation would to-day be impossible.

At half-past ten the blade fell, cutting through a thicket of redundant amendments. On division taken in crowded House, Clause 1 was added to the Bill by 348 votes against 140.

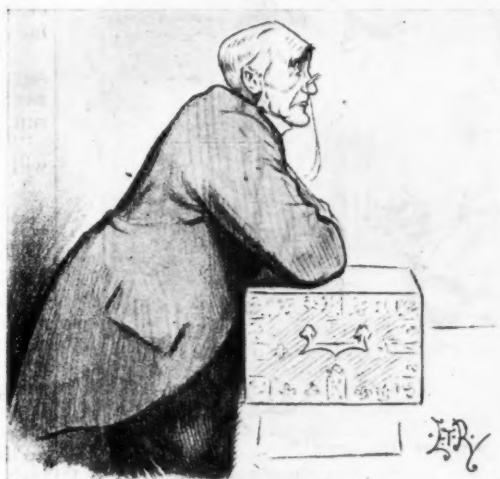
ASQUITH has introduced new tactics in generalship. Formerly—notably in the giant days of Mr. G., who, with more than fourscore years on his back, carried Home Rule Bill of '93 through Committee single-handed—Minister in charge of important measure personally conducted it. One of the Law Officers, peradventure an Under-Secretary, was told off in attendance; but in the main it was a one-man job. ASQUITH has got together a finely selected team, ready at a sign to step in and reply to successive points. It includes Admiral McKENNA, HERBERT SAMUEL, who, starting well, is daily improving, and LULU. Among the younger men, this an incomparable trio of debating power.

On opposite Bench PRINCE ARTHUR in constant attendance. Has passed a Licensing Bill himself; knows all its ins and outs. Watchful, wary,

dexterous, he fights with his back to the wall all through the summer night. WALTER LONG, BONAR LAW, and SON AUSTEN chip in from time to time. Practically on the Opposition side it is a one-man fight.

At the outset SON AUSTEN got a rather nasty tumble. With righteous indignation denounced what he described as proposal of the Bill to reduce to the unit licences in country villages. HERBERT SAMUEL said the Bill contained no such proposal. Across the Table he quietly handed a copy, indicating the lines dealing with the case.

Through awkward pause SON AUSTEN studied the text. No doubt about it; someone had blundered. Would he admit his error, apologise and resume his seat? Not he. He turned upon the INFANT SAMUEL and hotly complained of interruption.



"YOUNGEST OF VISCOUNTS."  
(Lord Wolverhampton.)

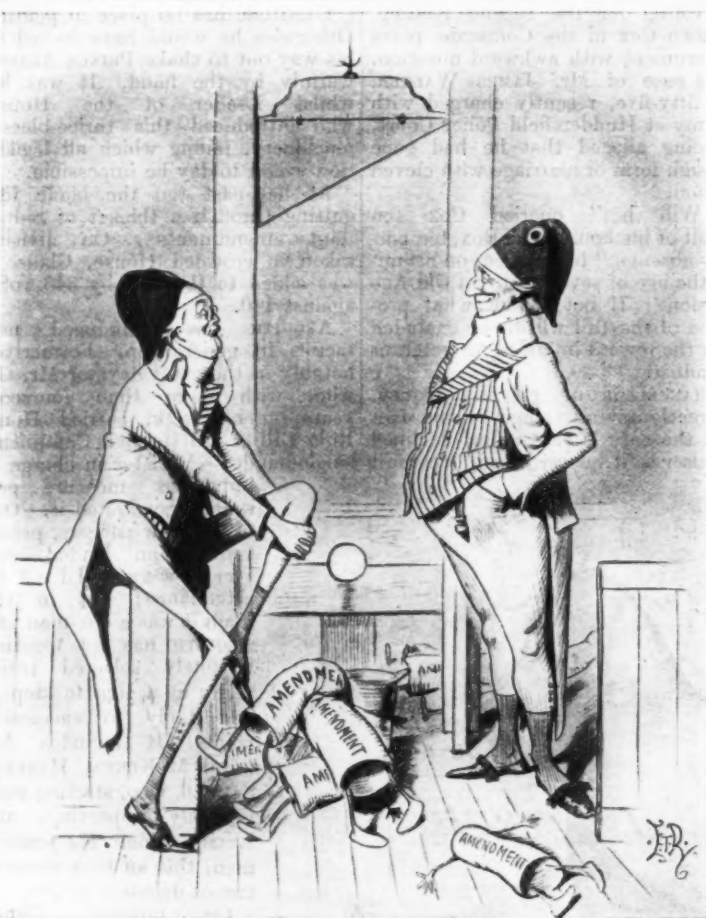
stands. Type of innumerable difficulties that will attend working of proposed Act.

*Business done.*—Young WEMYSS' motion designed to shelve Old Age Pensions Bill finding only 16 supporters in House of 139 Members, Bill read a second time without division.

*House of Commons, Tuesday.*—What a month ago seemed to be the impossible has been accomplished. To-night Clause 1 of Licensing Bill, perhaps the most important of the lot, got through Committee.

"It was the riding that did it," remarked the late Mr. PALMER, of Rugeley, commenting on the verdict of wilful murder and the consequent sentence of death.

"It was the guillotine that did it," the PREMIER might have observed as he folded up his paper and left Treasury Bench,



"AFTER YOU WITH THE GUILLOTINE!"

*Citizen B-l-f-r (to Citizen A-s-q-th).* "My dear comrade, duty compels me to hold you up to execration as an inhuman monster, but between ourselves it absolutely makes my mouth water to hear the dear old thing come scrunching down! You're a perfect marvel at it, my boy!"

Opposition, taking the cue, loudly cheered.

"We only ask," said PREMIER, interposing, "that the right hon. gentleman should read our Bill before he criticises it."

Here Ministerialists broke in with strident cheer.

SON AUSTEN had gained his point. Amid the angry scene his blunder was overlooked. But only temporarily. The House, to certain extent a business assembly, thinks that, after all, there is something in the PREMIER's insistence on essential preliminary to discussing a Bill.

*Business done.*—Clause 1 of Licensing Bill passed through Committee. Remainder shelved till Autumn Sitings.

*Friday.*—Some men are never satisfied. Members to-day enjoy privileges and comforts unknown to predecessors of so short a time back

as twenty years. LULU, most popular of First Commissioners, has marked his short reign by various improvements. As for the Kitchen Committee, under Chairmanship of JACOBY, it has wrought wonders. Think of the shilling dinner: Soup, fish, choice of two entrées, joint, game in season, tarts galore, rich choice of cheese, and bread at discretion.

True, the quails are small. SARK, turning the thing over to-night in quest of scraps of flesh, says he understands how in ancient Palestine two sparrows were sold for a farthing. But what would you? There are limits to the possibilities of a shilling, even in JACOBY's dexterous hand.

Now, here comes HARWOOD wanting a verandah built over a portion of the Terrace, so that in wet weather Members may meditate on

the spectacle of the storm-swept Thames.

"We like," he said, "to enjoy fresh air, even when it is raining."

This a novel view of the business for which Members are sent to Westminster—to sit on the Terrace and enjoy fresh air, wet or shine.

"I may remind my hon. friend," retorted LULU with grave sarcasm, "that there is abundant supply of excellent fresh air within this Chamber."

*Business done.*—Report stage of Irish Universities Bill.

### A TRIAL TRIP.

WHEN quite young I made a model fire-escape, an ambulance, a torpedo destroyer, a Thames dredger, an electric tram, a toy lathe, and a half-plate camera.

"Why don't you make a microscope?" said JORKINS one evening as we were giving the dredger a run across the dining-room carpet.

"Done!" I replied. "I will! I will make it in chapters."

#### CHAPTER I.

##### *The Eye Piece.*

The Eye Piece is, as everyone knows, situate in a pleasant residential locality at the extreme north of the instrument. When examining a caterpillar's collar stud or a spider's spinning jenny, it will be the first thing that strikes one's eye. Hence, I suppose, its name. Mine consisted of two lenses, which I picked up dirt cheap at a second-hand book-stall.

The object of the Eye Piece is to prevent children from falling down the tube of the microscope and so injuring the objective.

#### CHAPTER II.

##### *The Tube.*

Unlike most other tubes, the Tube of the microscope has no intermediate stations. I christened one end of mine Shepherd's Bush, and the other Bank. When a dandelion's foreleg got in at the Shepherd's Bush end it travelled right through (growing larger and larger), until the man at the Eye Piece called out "Bank!" Then it got out.

#### CHAPTER III.

##### *The Mechanical Stage.*

The Mechanical Stage is that part of the microscope specially devoted to dramatic productions. It is here we place our troupe of highly-trained rhizopods, our comedy trio of cheese-mites. It is worked on the Two-



GUNNING KING

Minister (much gratified). "And so, SAUNDERS, you think that we MINISTERS ought to get larger stipends?"  
Saunders. "AY. YE SEE WE WAD GET A BETTER CLASS O' MEN!"

House system. As soon as one turn has finished, a twist of the milled head brings on another, and number one waits in the wings for the Second House.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Having described my microscope in detail, I will now give a short account of her speed trials. They took place one Sunday evening. I was the commodore, JORKINS the stoker, and SYMPSON watched for the Admiralty. Having broken a bottle of dry ginger ale over her bows, SYMPSON said we might proceed to test her engines.

#### GRAND FINAL EPISODE.

##### The Drop of Water.

Selection by the orchestra—*A Life on the Ocean Wave.*

The first object to be examined was a drop of pond water. JORKINS had gathered it, and assured us that it teemed with microscopic life. "Then hard-a-port," I shouted, and we dropped it on the mechanical stage.

"What do you see?" I asked SYMPSON, who was at the Eye Piece.

"Nothing," replied SYMPSON.

"Put her two points to windward," I called out to JORKINS, who had now taken off his coat.

"What do you see now?" I asked.

"Water," replied SYMPSON.

"Good! Anything else?"

"No—yes—It's a thing with a fat body and a—mouth and a tail."

"That's a porpoise," I said.

"Hard-a-port."

"Now there's a long thing with any number of legs."

"Southend pier," I said. "We shall be in choppy water in a minute."

"Don't," cried SYMPSON. "Now there's a—ugh—"

"A ground swell," explained JORKINS.

And SYMPSON, who is a martyr to *mal-de-mer*, went below.

"JORKINS! Up in the conning-tower," I gave the order.

"Ay, ay, skipper," cried JORKINS, who was now covered with grease and perspiration.

"Light on the port bow," he suddenly called out.

"What does she look like?"

"A rakish-looking craft with a big head and ninety-seven legs."

"Margate jetty," I said. "Run her close in and reconnoitre."

Suddenly we ran aground.

"Full speed aster-r-rn," I shouted, and I rushed to the steering-gear.

Our drop of water had evaporated.

THE END.

#### A Simple Arithmetical Problem.

Mr. TILAK, the Indian Nationalist leader who published seditious articles in his newspaper *Kesari*, made an address to the jury lasting six days. He was fined £66, and sentenced to six years' transportation. Even an innocent man might have received that sentence in the circumstances.

#### So near and yet so far.

"Standing from Sandgate, near Calais, J. Wolfe will to-morrow make another attempt to swim across the Channel."—*Daily Mail.*

Unhappily even this encouragement did not bring him success. But it was a nice thought, all the same.



## PROVERBIAL NEGLECT.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—I have a real grievance. It occurred to me last Sunday week, and I have been trying to write about it ever since, but— Well, the fact is they have been putting rape in my seed-pot lately and I simply have no time for anything. To-day they are late in feeding me—so here goes.

I had just been uncovered and had hopped from the ring, where I sleep, down to the perch, where I live. Before springing on to my seed-pot I glanced out of the dining-room window. A robin was looking for his breakfast in the laurustinus. "Poor thing!" I said, and cracked ninety-three rape seeds; then, "Fancy having to turn out on a rotten morning like this." Next I started on the water-cress. Simultaneously the robin discovered a long worm. "Heavens!" I cried. "This must be The Early Bird." Full of excitement I rushed to the edge of the cage to catch another glimpse. But the robin had retired with his *petit déjeuner*.

The world seemed very empty, and I remained quite still for several seconds—thinking—thinking. At the end of that time I found I had a grievance. So have all the other canaries, if they only knew it.

Dear Mr. Punch, why don't they put us into proverbs? There are thousands and thousands of canaries (besides linnets and bullfinches and other cage-birds) in these islands alone—and not one proverb among the lot of us. Not one. Look how many the other birds have—the bird in the bush—the bird that wouldn't be caught with chaff, and lots of others. Even a wretched stray cat is better off than we are. And as for dogs, bears and tortoises—why, I am perfectly sick of hearing about them.

Of course, you say you don't want any more proverbs. Don't you, though? Things are always happening that the proverb-makers never

thought of. Supposing you just miss a railway accident through staying for an extra glass of gingerade? Neither "Taking a horse to the water," nor "A stitch in time" quite fits the case, does it? So that you see you do want one or two more—really good ones.

*It's no good leaving the cage door*

*A green canary should not bathe.* That is another one. I don't know exactly when you ought to say it, but if your canary is green, that helps the point.

*Paint its cage yellow and your canary will disappear.* This suggests a scientific problem that should keep canary-owners awake for many a

night and incidentally benefit the colour-artist.

*The hand that gives the groundsel gets the song.* This should cover a bare patch or two in life's daily round, though I am afraid it is a bit like "Virtue is its own Reward." Still most people would rather talk about canaries than virtue. Always cater for the masses.

*A blind canary will eat lead shot.* Do not take a blind canary to the theatre. Both of these may be funny, but not, in my poor opinion, in very good taste.

In conclusion I should like to tell you of one I thought of in my bath yesterday. It is short, yet so full of meaning. It seems to bring before us, in a few simple words, all those grand mysteries of Life and Death. It runs as follows:—*A stuffed canary does not sing.*

What do you think of that?

Dear Mr. Punch, I should feel very grateful if you would publish this letter. People ought to know what a lot of good-wearing proverbs we could supply them.

I am, yours truly,

PETER

("London Fancy").

P.S.—There are heaps of others.

**HOLIDAY NOTICES**

**A WEEK IN GREENLAND**  
for FIVE GUINEAS

Seal Pinking, SKATING  
BEAR SHOOTING  
PICNICS ON THE ICE!

**BREEZY BRAZIL**

FAST STEAMERS

FOR PARTICULARS  
APPLY TO  
SMOOK'S TOURIST AGENCY

**SPEND YOUR HOLIDAY AT SOUTHERN**

SEE WHAT YOU SAVE

GLORIOUS SEA  
DANCING ALL DAY IN THE SUN

**THE SAHARA**

EXPLORERS OF THE DESERT  
FREQUENT SAILINGS

FINE SANDS  
GOOD HOTELS  
MOROCCO

TROPICAL TOURS LTD.  
10, SOUTH FIELDS

GEO. MORROW.

**A DIFFICULT CHOICE.**

open after the canary is dead. I thought of that the other morning. It sounds nice, and might come in well when a cheque is returned dishonoured.

*A canary that is not fed to-day To-morrow will have flown away.* That is poetry. A mistress might use it now and then during spring cleaning to urge on an unwilling maid. Or the maid herself might quote it when giving notice.

Referring to the new war balloon, "Dirigible No. 2," *The Evening News* says:

"It creates on the mind of the spectator the impression of a colossal German sausage." We have heard of "footprints on the sands of time," but this seems to be quite a new impression, and we tremble to think of the mental state of London after the new balloon has made a trial trip over the metropolis.





*Dowager.* "So YOU ARE COMMENCING A PRACTICE HERE. YOU'RE RATHER YOUNG, AREN'T YOU?"  
*Young Medico.* "OH—ER—WELL—I ONLY EXPECT TO START ON CHILDREN FIRST, YOU KNOW."

#### G.P.O.

Mr. Punch, always anxious to please and assist, has collected a few suggestions in response to the Postmaster-General's pathetic plea for a scheme that shall benefit his revenues as successfully as did the Limerick Craze:—

Charge a shilling for permission to view Mons. WALKLEY at work in his room. IMRÉ KIRALFY.

Establish penny postage to Lapland. J. HENNIKER HEATON.

Persuade Mr. ALGERNON ASHTON to begin writing letters again.

EDITOR, P.M.G.

Purchase the proceeds of the Buckingham Palace waste-paper basket every day and sell them to tuft-hunters and flunkies at an exorbitant figure. DIOGENES.

Establish penny postage to Spitzbergen. J. HENNIKER HEATON.

Induce some rich paper to libel the Postmaster-General—by saying, for example, that his express messengers exceed the speed limit—and then claim heavy damages.

W. H. LEVER.

Make it possible for other persons

besides gloomy and cynical Post Office clerks to sell stamps.

COMMON SENSE.

Invest the capital of the Post Office Savings Bank in the Coliseum.

OSWALD STOLL.

Open high-priced reading-rooms for the perusal of other people's Poste Restante letters. PAUL PRY.

Establish penny postage to Minorca. J. HENNIKER HEATON.

Charge an entrance fee for the inspection of the bumps (candles, one shilling each) of the wonderful clerks who find out the puzzle addresses and send an account of this triumph to the papers. BOSTOCK.

Establish penny postage to Tierra del Fuego. J. HENNIKER HEATON.

Move into the country and let me have St. Martin's-le-Grand for a restaurant. JOE LYONS.

Establish penny postage to Stromboli. J. HENNIKER HEATON.

Go through the registered letters. WORMWOOD SCRUBBS.

"IRISH KILT AT WESTMINSTER."—*The Standard.*  
*The Standard's* attempt at local colour is excellent, but nothing is said as to who kilt them.

#### The Brutal English.

From a German picture-postcard:

"363. ENGLISCHE KRIEGSSCHIFFE.  
 No. 10. H.M.S. 'Loocaster.' Armoured  
 cruiser, 9,800 ts."

"One saw the hand that was raised to cheer  
 fall limply by its owner's side."

*Manchester Guardian.*

But what about the voice that was  
 going to pat the winner on the back?

"The final of the 400 metres flat race—which  
 is a trifle less than three yards short of a  
 quarter of a mile—was the principal event...  
 Another tape had been stretched about a yard  
 further on to give the winner a chance of  
 breaking the quarter-mile record."—*Daily Mail.*

Why not another tape 100 yards  
 further on for the half-mile record?

*The Yorkshire Evening Post* makes  
 mention of an accident to a man  
 whom it describes as a "cotton  
 singer," and in this connection we  
 may say that we once knew a man  
 whom we should unhesitatingly  
 describe as a "rotten singer."

From an advertisement in *The  
 Staffordshire Sentinel*:—

"Several smart lads wanted... Lads  
 must be respectable or useless."

It seems a terrible alternative.

## OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

*Love's Shadow* (GRANT RICHARDS), by ADA LEVERSON, is a most refreshing sketch, and I only wish that a few more woman-writers had her joyous sense of humour. The story is not much in itself, and its construction is rather desultory; the author, indeed, seems to have written a new chapter just whenever a fresh idea came into her charming head. But her dialogue is a pure delight. Of the heroine, who describes herself as a "bachelor girl," we are told that she had not enough of the Bohemian quality to warrant that description; "she was too plastic, too finished." I am sure Mrs. LEVERSON has no more notion what this contradictory sentence means than I have: but I easily forgive her for the sake of the courage which she shows in letting the girl make her own running along the course of true love. The fun that is made out of *Bruce Ottley*, of the Foreign Office, is perhaps a little exaggerated and certainly tends to grow discursive. But his patient wife, who sees through his foibles but forbears to take advantage of her insight, is a noble example of restrained humour on the part both of the lady and her creator. By the way, how is it that *Lord Selsey*, who cuts out *Cecil Reeve*, his nephew and heir, in the affections of the widow *Eugenia*, is only twenty years older than that nephew? *Cecil's* father (*Lord Selsey's* younger brother) must have married at a very precocious age.

But this is mere captiousness. Mrs. LEVERSON's book marks a great advance upon her previous work, and I hope she will not miss the appreciation which she has thoroughly earned.

When young *Nevile Arnott* fell in love with *Pauline* (CONSTABLE), a lady with a past, there was a good deal of fluttering in the Arnott dovecote, and the wise mother-bird promptly winged her way to Switzerland, there to talk to the siren, as woman to woman. *Pauline's* husband was a bad lot, and she had divorced him. Also she was an actress, and some years older than *Nevile*, who was engaged to a nice little bread-and-butter miss at home. Mrs. Arnott put it to *Pauline* that for all these reasons she was no fit mate for the pride of the Arnotts, and *Pauline*, far from contradicting her, offered to make her young lover believe that she really was as black as she had been painted. The conventional youth (Eton and Oxford) obediently and blindly walked into the trap. He returned to his *Evangeline*, won a by-election for the Unionists, compared with which *Pudsey* was a moral victory for the Liberal Party, and was on the point of settling down as a prosy married M.P.—when,

one unlucky day, he went to see *Pauline* in a French play. He guessed from her performance that she had sacrificed herself to save him and please mamma; had his head cracked with a decanter, of all vulgar weapons, by an admirer of the lady; was jilted by *Evangeline*, and, after all, accepted by his other love, only to learn that she had received her death-sentence from the doctors. As a rule I enjoy the novels of Mr. W. E. NORRIS, but this one I find a trifle heavy, in spite of the comic interludes of a terrible old lady with an ear-trumpet who had an inconvenient habit of thinking aloud. There is good work in *Pauline*, but as a whole it seems to me to fall a little short of the high standard which we generally expect from Mr. NORRIS.

Mr. LOUIS J. VANCE's story, *The Black Bag* (GRANT RICHARDS), begins, as all good romances should, in a London hotel; but it is not long before the villain is sneaking out by a back door to avoid the police, and the hero and heroine are driving to Bloomsbury in a hansom. On page 60 they two are, with the exception of the body of an unknown man, alone in an empty house; and if there is one thing more romantic than a London hotel and a hansom cab it is an empty house. But *Philip's* happiness, for he is by this time in love with *Dorothy*, is short-lived, for by page 107 the boat was—this is official—gathering impetus as it momentarily diminished in the night's illusory perspective; the boat, that is, which was conveying the villain and the girl aboard the brigantine. *Philip* was at the



The Foal. "Oh, MA, IS THAT GEE GOING FOR A RIDE IN A MOTOR?"

wharf to see them off, not being aware that the other man really was the villain; and *Dorothy* went quite willingly, under the mistaken impression that he was her father. However, *Philip* finds out his error and gives chase. Up till now he has not even tapped his hip-pocket significantly, far less shot anybody; but at Antwerp he boards the brigantine, collects all the revolvers (I am never happy until the hero has all the revolvers) and makes off with the *Black Bag* and *Dorothy*. It is then the villain's turn to give chase—his effort is even more exciting. Mr. VANCE knows exactly how to do this sort of story, and I recommend him enthusiastically to all who are not familiar with his methods. I forgive him for making his hero American, seeing that the latter talks English and has his adventures in Europe. If *Philip* had got the bulge on a club-footed snipe in Fifth Avenue, it would have been another matter.

"The Old Lamp at Lord's again brightly burns. Its lustre has been momentarily hidden by the shreds and patches that percolated the rind of secrecy that those who were striving to run the Triangular Tests endeavoured to set up."—*The Observer*.

The writer must get his left leg across more for this stroke.